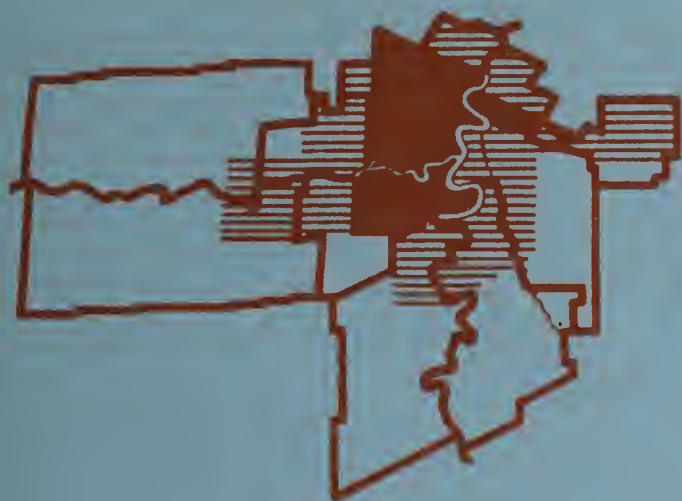


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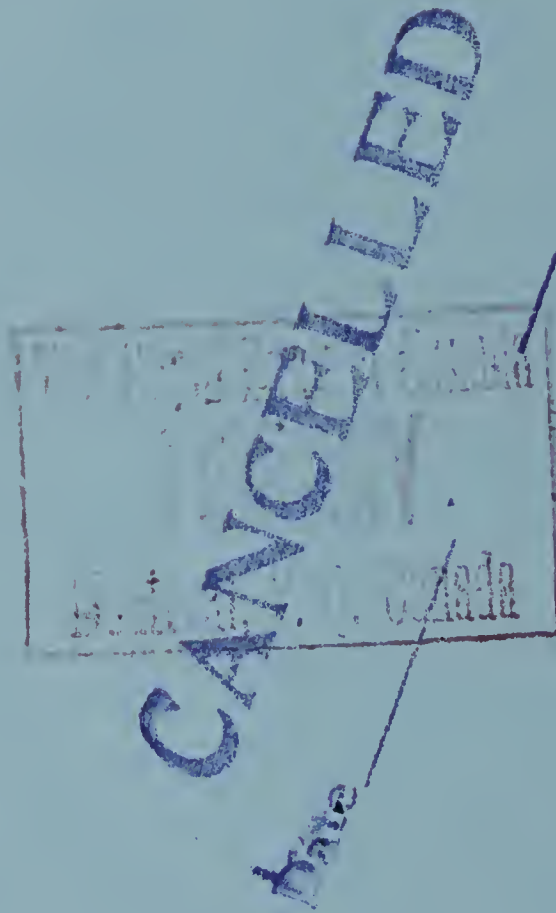
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# CITY'S APPEARANCE GREATER WINNIPEG

1948

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P R E L I M I N A R Y   R E P O R T   O N

# CITY'S APPEARANCE

PART OF METROPOLITAN PLAN FOR GREATER WINNIPEG

Assiniboia .. Brooklands .. Charleswood  
East Kildonan . Fort Garry . St. Boniface  
St. James .... St. Vital .... Transcona  
Tuxedo .... West Kildonan .... Winnipeg

M A N I T O B A

C A N A D A

NO. 9 OF

MASTER PLAN REPORTS

Prepared Jointly By

*Winnipeg.*

METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMITTEE  
WINNIPEG TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

*and*

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## FOREWORD

The comprehensive plan for the metropolitan area is being prepared by the Metropolitan Planning Committee (Greater Winnipeg) and the Winnipeg Town Planning Commission, which in 1944 jointly established the 'Metropolitan Plan - Greater Winnipeg' for this purpose. Reports have been published on Background for Planning, Major Thorofares, Transportation, Transit, Zoning, Neighborhoods (including Schools, Recreation and Parks), Residential Areas and Central Business District.

The City's Appearance report, ninth and final report in the series, deals with factors affecting the general appearance of the urban area, cites many of the existing undesirable conditions, and suggests various means of improvement.

The proposals embodied herein were prepared in the Planning Office for review by a Citizen Advisory Committee on City's Appearance. This committee was one of several appointed by the Joint Executive Committee from nominations submitted by organizations throughout the metropolitan area, for the purpose of reviewing proposals on the various phases of the comprehensive plan. Many valuable suggestions were made by the Citizen Committee and incorporated in this report.

## RELATION TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The nature of a study of our city's appearance does not lend itself to precise recommendations for action to be undertaken purely by public bodies. Techniques for improvements are therefore largely presented as suggestions, to increase general awareness of the appearance of the urban area and interest in improvement in whatever ways are feasible. Public bodies may be looked upon to offer leadership in providing attractive developments, but the best over-all results are dependent largely upon the activities of individuals and corporations in development of their own properties.

It should be made clear that appearance is not the major concern of town planning. Basic planning studies for Greater Winnipeg covered such phases of physical development as major thoroughfares, to provide for adequate circulation; transit and transportation, to offer large-scale movement within and access to the urban area; zoning, to guide future development into desirable locations and thus produce greater stability in land uses and values; neighborhood development, to locate schools, playgrounds and parks where they will best serve the needs of the people; and the central business district, to take the action necessary to prevent acute congestion and resulting uneconomic decentralization. The provision of these fundamental functional needs of the city can and should be accompanied by consideration of the appearance value of the whole.

A pleasing urban area is the product of foresight and energy on the part of all. Just as a pleasant home contains a warmth of feeling created by something more than the bare essentials of living, so a pleasant city will reflect the warmth of its people through the attractiveness of the setting provided for living. Appreciation of the appearance of his surroundings has played a significant part in the civilizing development of mankind from the earliest times. Aesthetic appreciation has grown hand in hand with the development of purely physical comforts in all civilizations and must be so in ours no less than in any other. It has contributed measurably to the improvement of the human mind in its search for a better life and cannot therefore be regarded lightly or as a mere superficiality. It has been truly said, "Man does not live by bread alone."



# CIVIC CENTRE AND OTHER PUBLIC BUILDINGS

## Public Buildings — Location and Grouping

Public buildings are a necessary part of urban development, accommodating the staff and equipment essential to the provision of public services. The type of public buildings required depends upon the characteristics of the urban area. As capital of the Province of Manitoba, Winnipeg contains the provincial government headquarters. Due to its central location approximately midway between the Atlantic and Pacific and its relative importance in the prairie provinces, the regional or prairie offices of some Dominion Government departments are located here. At the present time, buildings and offices used by the Dominion, Provincial and Municipal governments in Greater Winnipeg are widely scattered.

Dominion Government buildings in the Central Business District include the Dominion Public Building or Federal Building, at Main Street and Water Avenue, and the Post Office on Portage Avenue between Fort and Garry Streets. The Federal Building covers almost the entire site, providing little off-street parking space. Surrounding buildings cut off the view of this structure, which could have been developed into a notable city landmark had it been located on a larger site, with appropriate landscaping. The building blocks the eastern end of Graham Avenue, creating an indirect connection to Water Avenue, and is not readily accessible from the main business district, because it is necessary to make a left turn through traffic to reach the east side of Main Street from either Portage Avenue or Main Street north.

Lack of a spacious site detracts from the appearance of this government building.



The Post Office covers the entire site, nearby parking space being available only at the curb. Branch post offices are located throughout the urban area, where needed to provide service. Construction of a new central post office, with office space for other Dominion Government departments, is contemplated in the block bounded by Graham, Smith, St. Mary and Fort.

Numerous government offices which cannot be accommodated in the Federal Building are located in various downtown office buildings, including the Cadomin, Time, Royal Bank, Childs, Commercial, Lindsay, Somerset, Hamilton, Confederation Life, Power and Boyd buildings.

Provincial government headquarters are in the Legislative Building, which is located south-west of the Central Business District. The finest building of its kind in Canada, erected on an attractively landscaped site, the Legislative Building is a source of pride to residents of the province and a point of interest for tourists. The site, bounded by boulevarded Broadway



on the north and by a riverside drive on the south, provides off-street parking space for those with offices or business in the building. Some government branches and departments have offices in the nearby Revenue, Juvenile Court, Law Courts and Land Titles buildings, as well as in more distant buildings, such as the Health and Public Welfare Building at Portage Avenue and Sherbrook Street, and the old Normal School on William Avenue at Gertie Street. The new government garage is located on Kennedy Street, just north of Broadway. Manitoba Telephone System offices are in the central area, on Portage Avenue east of Main Street. The Manitoba Power Commission has offices downtown in the Canada Building. The University of Manitoba Junior Division is located in temporary buildings at Broadway and Osborne, with the permanent University site in the Municipality of Fort Garry.

Civic offices of the local governments in Greater Winnipeg are in Municipal Office buildings in most municipalities and in the City Hall in St. Boniface. Several municipalities have a combined fire hall and municipal hall, with space for police headquarters or school board offices in some cases. City of Winnipeg offices are in the City Hall, which is on Main Street north of the Central Business District, in the Civic Offices behind the City Hall, and in the City Hall annex, two blocks north. The Central Police Station is on Rupert Avenue. The Central Fire Station is a few blocks from the City Hall, at Bannatyne Avenue and Albert Street. The Main Library lies several blocks west at the corner of William and Ellen. School Board offices and the Public Welfare Department are in the Exchange Building on Princess Street. The Municipal Hospitals, King George and King Edward, are in Fort Rouge at the foot of Morley Avenue. The Central Market is in the block bounded by William Avenue, Princess Street, Market Avenue and King Street. Offices of the City of Winnipeg Hydro Electric System are in the Hydro Building on Princess Street, with showrooms on Portage Avenue at Kennedy Street. The Civic Auditorium is located on St. Mary Avenue, between Memorial Boulevard and Vaughan Street, and the Playhouse Theatre is on William Avenue, just south of Main Street.

Many other public buildings, such as public schools, utility sub-stations, fire stations, branch libraries and neighborhood recreation centres, serve distinct neighborhoods, rather than the whole community. Affiliated colleges of the University of Manitoba are located at separate sites and serve students of various denominations. In the City of Winnipeg, there are twelve fire stations, located to provide adequate protection, and three branch libraries operated to serve various portions of the city. The location and development of park and school sites are discussed fully in a separate report, dealing with Neighborhood Development.

The functions of government, whether Dominion, Provincial or Municipal, can usually be handled most effectively if offices are located in buildings grouped together. Such grouping permits building design and site treatment which will provide a much more desirable development than could be achieved through location of individual buildings on separate sites. Provision of public buildings by governments represents a large investment and offers a unique opportunity for grouping buildings on one large site. Many advantages may be gained thereby, in the form of increased convenience, better transit service, greater efficiency and economy and stimulated civic consciousness. Grouped buildings require a smaller aggregate acreage than would be needed for buildings located on separate sites with ample space and suitable landscaping. Buildings on one site, providing parking off the street and freedom from through traffic, offer more convenience for citizens with business in the buildings. Transit routes can usually be arranged to provide excellent service to a group of buildings, which could hardly be expected for individual buildings in scattered locations. Economy of operation is also possible, through combined operation of maintenance crews and through central heating. Public buildings located in an attractive group are thus able to make their full contribution, both functionally and aesthetically, to the good of the community.

Buildings serving all levels of government may be grouped on the same site, if it is sufficiently extensive to allow segregation within the site for each government level. Choice of site should be governed by local conditions and development. The present concentration of provincial government buildings in the Broadway area is a factor to be considered in determining the advisability of locating civic buildings in that vicinity.

Some public buildings which have specialized functions may not lend themselves to inclusion in a group development. For instance, a central Post Office needs to be near the source of heavy mailing loads, which is usually the Central Business District, with easy access to thoroughfare routes leading to the railway stations. Similarly, a central fire station, in order to offer the best possible protection, must be located near the large business buildings, and near thoroughfares offering quick access to the areas to be served.



## Civic Centre

At the present time, City of Winnipeg departments are severely crowded and in urgent need of expanded accommodation. Offices are scattered in various buildings because the City Hall is not large enough to provide necessary space. The present City Hall has served the city for over sixty years and should be replaced with a new building which will be large enough to accommodate all departments. This new building could form the core of a civic centre, providing office space for all city departments, including police headquarters, school board and parks board offices. Offices should be concentrated in one section which is designed as an efficient office structure, rather than scattered about as appendages to other functional sections. The centre should include facilities for community activities, including a museum, art gallery and library; and facilities for recreation activities, unless they are provided in connection with some other development such as an Exhibition site.

A civic centre must be centrally located if community and recreational facilities are to be accessible to all citizens of Greater Winnipeg. Since interference with commercial development is undesirable, the best site would be one lying just beyond the boundary of the Central Business District.

It is recommended that careful consideration be given to the feasibility of locating the new City Hall in a Civic Centre site including the present Civic Auditorium, located on St. Mary Avenue between Memorial Boulevard and Vaughan Street. This building has a fine appearance, and is widely used for concerts, festivals, plays, lectures, displays, carnivals, and dances. In addition to the main auditorium, which seats 4,000 people, it contains a concert hall, assembly hall, the art gallery and the museum.

The need for a new City Hall was discussed by City Council in April 1947 and referred to a special Committee of Council, which requested the Winnipeg Town Planning Commission to recommend a suitable site for the proposed building. The Commission agreed that a new City Hall should form part of a Civic Centre development, and proceeded to review site possibilities. Six suggested locations were evaluated by means of applying scores derived from weights given to seven factors which were deemed important in site selection. The suggested locations were:

1. Present City Hall site, enlarged to include the area bounded by James Avenue, William Avenue, Princess Street and Main Street.
2. Site of the Junior Division of the University of Manitoba, bounded by Broadway, the lane west of Osborne Street, Cooper Avenue and Memorial Boulevard, except for All Saints' Church property.
3. Area east of St. Paul's College and north of Ellice Avenue, bounded by Ellice Avenue, Kennedy Street, Qu'Appelle Avenue and Hargrave Street.
4. Area east of the Civic Auditorium, bounded by St. Mary Avenue, Kennedy Street, Broadway and Carlton Street, except for frontage on Broadway between Kennedy and Edmonton, and on Kennedy Street south of York Avenue.
5. Osborne Stadium site, extended south to the Assiniboine River, bounded by Bridges Avenue, Assiniboine River, Colony Street and Osborne Street.
6. Site on north-west corner of Sherbrook Street and Portage Avenue, bounded by Sherbrook Street, Portage Avenue, Maryland Street and St. Matthews Avenue.

The influencing factors which were used as a basis for evaluation of the desirability of each possible site, were the following, in order of importance:

1. Accessibility for all citizens by public transit.
2. Size of area - including adequate space for building, parking and landscaping.
3. Appearance - including visibility from important thoroughfares, impression of stability and prestige and dignity.
4. Proximity to Central Business District.
5. Relation to surrounding buildings.
6. Coordination with existing public buildings.
7. Beneficial effect on surrounding area.

As a result of this consideration, the Winnipeg Town Planning Commission recommended the Broadway site of the Junior Division of the University of Manitoba for a Civic Centre site.



The suggested area is bounded by Cooper Avenue, the lane west of Osborne Street, Broadway and Memorial Boulevard, excluding the property occupied by All Saints' Church.

Subsequently, it was learned that the key property in this site, the land occupied by the Junior Division of the University of Manitoba, would not be released by the Provincial Government, since it was being held for Provincial Government use. The Commission then reviewed the sites and recommended the present City Hall site, expanded to include the entire area bounded by Main, William, James and Princess.

### **Public Utility and Public Service Buildings**

The provision of sewer, water and power service in an urban area should be governed by geographical and physical characteristics, rather than political boundaries. The desirability of such a regional approach was realized in Greater Winnipeg some years ago and, as a result, local governments in the area cooperated in providing these essential services.

The water supply system is operated by the Greater Winnipeg Water District, and the sewage disposal system by the Greater Winnipeg Sanitary District. Electric power is supplied by the publicly owned City of Winnipeg Hydro Electric system which provides service in the City of Winnipeg and the Village of Brooklands, and by the privately owned Winnipeg Electric Company which provides service in all of Greater Winnipeg.

The nature of service provided by public utilities and public services requires that buildings should be permitted to locate in any district, subject to approval by Council. Necessary public utility buildings or structures may take the form of power substations, water pumping stations, sewage treatment plants, gas pressure tanks, central heating plants and the like. Telephone service may require branch exchanges. Disposal of refuse may require construction of an incinerator in some of the municipalities.

Power substations and telephone exchanges should be developed in harmony with existing development - particularly in residential areas. This has been practiced in Winnipeg in some instances, such as the telephone exchange in River Heights. The possibility of combining developments which may be mutually advantageous should be given consideration. Park developments around water reservoirs or water cooling systems, which are enclosed by a wire fence to avoid danger, will produce an attractive area, improved by the added interest of the pool. This treatment has been used to advantage in other Canadian cities, where small pools are surrounded by well maintained lawns, flower beds, shrubs and trees.

High tension transmission lines and distribution substations should be located away from residential districts, due to the accompanying hazards, being preferable in a light or heavy industrial area.

Sewage treatment and refuse disposal structures should be located only in the least restricted districts. Sewage treatment plants can be designed, however, to offer a pleasing appearance and to minimize objectionable odors. Such a building is the treatment plant of the Greater Winnipeg Sanitary District, located in Old Kildonan opposite the Kildonan Golf Course, an excellent example of a well designed plant, with appropriate landscaping.

### **Schools, Churches and Recreation Areas**

School and recreation buildings designed to serve small neighborhood areas should be provided within easy reach of all residents of Greater Winnipeg. The large investment in schools and their importance in the community demands special treatment, which was given to this phase of development in a separate report on Neighborhoods.

Wherever possible, coordination of school, playground and neighborhood park facilities is desirable. School grounds could be greatly improved by landscaping with trees, shrubbery and turf, in place of gravel and cinders. Improved landscaping of the large number of school grounds in Greater Winnipeg to produce more attractive areas would do much to help the appearance of the urban area. Parks add greatly to the appearance of the city, while providing



pleasant areas for needed recreation. Churches need not be crowded onto small lots, but can be developed with trees and shrubs to improve the general appearance of the street.

Trees and hedges lend a pleasant, restful touch, adding to the attractiveness of the site and the neighboring area.



With increased interest being evidenced in community clubs, many buildings and facilities are being provided for recreation. These developments, if carried out with foresight and imagination, should also help to produce greater livability in Greater Winnipeg. Continuous care must be exercised to insure that they do not deteriorate into veritable eye-sores through neglect.



A popular play spot improving appearance as well as serving a need.

### Architectural Control

The question of whether or not the design of buildings should be controlled for the purpose of producing harmonious future development, is one which has been considered here and elsewhere at considerable length. The consensus of opinion generally is that architectural control is the only sure means of attaining desirable development in special areas, or along prominent thoroughfares. The difficulty, however, lies in administration, due to the fact that the acceptable appearance of a building is so strongly influenced by personal tastes.

Control of public building design has been practiced in the United States, but control of private buildings has not been upheld by the courts. It seems reasonable to assume, however, that if public interest in and demand for control should increase, public opinion would be reflected in court decisions.



Effective architectural control depends upon the proper selection of the body responsible for deciding whether or not a building is acceptable, and upon proper use of the powers vested in such a body. The power must be placed with those who have the knowledge and ability to make consistently fair decisions, which are necessary to the creation and maintenance of public respect and confidence. The Winnipeg City Charter gives the City power to enforce control over architecture, but the City Council has never seen fit to put this power to use.

Study by the Winnipeg Town Planning Commission of possible sites for the University and for a proposed Civic Centre, raised a question regarding future development of the Osborne Street frontage from Broadway to Memorial Boulevard, and of Memorial Boulevard from Broadway to Portage Avenue. The Commission felt that the character of any proposed private development of property in this area should be studied in relation to the appropriate location of such a use. It was further agreed that private development should be postponed until a decision was reached on a Civic Centre site, as the Broadway area was one of several proposed sites. The Property Committee was therefore requested to submit plans for any proposed building to the Commission before disposing of City owned property in this immediate area. After the decision of the City Council that the proposed City Hall be located on the present site, property on Osborne Street was no longer held and private development proceeded.

The Commission realized, however, that architectural control was not wholly a planning function and that a planning body was not necessarily the proper body to assume the responsibility of making the decision as to appropriate design. A committee was therefore appointed by the Commission, with representatives from the Manitoba Association of Architects and the Manitoba Federation of Artists, comprising two members of the Winnipeg Town Planning Commission, the President and one other member of the Manitoba Association of Architects, and one member of the Building Commissioner's Department.

The difficulties inherent in the provision of architectural control make it impossible to say decisively whether such control is advantageous or otherwise. It may seem most desirable as a means of preventing wild variations in construction types. On the other hand, it might result in monotonous regularity. Some of the difficulties are cited here in the hope that discussion of the problem may help in finding some solution.

# APPEARANCE OF METROPOLITAN AREA

## Conservation of Natural Beauty

The attractiveness of the urban area can be greatly enhanced by conserving natural beauty spots, which offer trees, rolling terrain or streams as points of interest. In the Greater Winnipeg area there is little rolling ground except for gentle slopes along the winding courses of the rivers, where wooded areas offer possibilities for interesting development.

The Assiniboine River, flowing from the west into the Red River, has been used to advantage in the development of Assiniboine Park, which is situated on its south bank. Assiniboine Drive follows the river from the park into the City of Winnipeg. Omand Creek, which flows from the northwest into the Assiniboine River, offers a cool, shaded spot in summer which although largely undeveloped is popular with 'cyclists. In winter, the snow covered slopes of the creek are used for sleighing and skiing. Several parks or park sites are located on the banks of the Red River - namely St. Vital, Wildewood, Churchill, Whittier, St. John's and Kildonan. The Winnipeg Canoe Club which is located on the bank of the Red River in St. Vital uses the river facilities for such aquatic sports as sailing, canoeing, sculling and swimming. Other swimming and boating clubs also use the river in the summer, and many ski clubs carry on their winter sports on the river banks. The smaller Seine River, flowing through St. Vital and St. Boniface into the Red River, has several golf courses along its banks. While not a large stream, it follows a winding course, offering a welcome change in the landscape with attractive sites for recreation areas.

A detailed record of parks and recreation areas appears in the report on Neighborhoods. The implementation of recommendations presented therein for future development will not only help to meet the need for recreation facilities, but will also do much to improve the appearance of the metropolitan area. Existing park locations should be linked with river drives and parkways, and new large parks could be developed to advantage along the river in East Kildonan and St. Boniface. Recommendations for parkway development also appear in the Neighborhood report.

In the development of proposed river drives, it is recommended that care be taken in planting the area between the drive and the river, in order that the view of the river is not blocked throughout its length by this planting. It is suggested that planting be grouped, using low shrubs as well as trees in order to provide many interesting vistas directly from the driveway to the water course. Otherwise, there will be little value in the proximity of the drive to the river.

## Design of Bridges and Underpasses

The pattern of the rivers in Greater Winnipeg has required construction of numerous bridges to provide access from one area to another. In addition to their primary use value, bridges can be real assets to the appearance of the city, if the structures are designed with a view to good proportions and general aesthetic qualities and the approaches are suitably landscaped. A good example in Greater Winnipeg of what can be accomplished by proper design and treatment in producing a pleasant beauty spot is the foot bridge from St. James to Assiniboine Park. A park area of lawn and trees lies on the north bank of the river, the foot bridge is of pleasing proportions, lighting fixtures are unobtrusive and the entrance to the park is related to the bridge.

The Pembina Highway subway has grass slopes on both sides, but the recent erection of billboards on property adjoining the approaches has detracted from the appearance value. At the Norwood Bridge approach, widening of the pavement has improved traffic movement and the Council of St. Boniface has recently indicated its intention of developing a park north of the Marion Street - St. Mary's Road junction. The Salter Street viaduct has a pleasing



appearance insofar as the structure itself is concerned, but the approaches are on crowded streets, some of which are lined with unkempt buildings. Serious consideration should be given to removal of particularly unsightly buildings and the general improvement of the areas about the approaches to the viaduct.

It is suggested that in the design of any new structures careful consideration be given to their general appearance and to any modern techniques which will aid in providing better appearing structures.

The general practice of painting the steel structures of bridges and underpasses with black paint may be improved by the use of attractive colors. No specific recommendation is made for use of particular colors, but the general suggestion is that they be such as to help blend these structures into their surroundings. This applies particularly to older, rather less sightly structures with considerable overhead steel, whose impact on the appearance of the community is much greater than that of the more modern, low structures.



The only direct route to a residential area, this subway approach is lined with coal piles and poles.



Cluttered backyards are an eyesore at the approach to this bridge.

### Treatment of Railway Approaches

The railways have done a good job in property improvement in a number of locations, and their example has been followed in some instances by adjacent property owners. This action is commendable and it is to be hoped that the railways will improve more of their properties, continuing to take the initiative in producing a better looking urban area.



The railways form a most important part of development in Greater Winnipeg, the largest privately owned railway yards in the world being those of the Canadian Pacific Railway in North Winnipeg. In addition to the yards and shops of the railway, the tracks criss-cross and encircle the entire area. It is, therefore, most desirable that some of these properties be treated so as to interfere as little as possible with neighboring uses. Large expenditures are being made by the railways for new equipment in accordance with modernization programs which aim to provide better service, comfort and appearance. It is suggested that as part of these programs consideration be given to further improvement of properties, particularly those in constant view. Citizens could then point with pride to their community as a railway centre in which the railways work with the community for the good of the whole.

The appearance of railway properties can be greatly improved by suitable landscaping with buffer strips of planting which will serve to absorb smoke and noise. Planting of trees and shrubs, provision of well-kept lawns, and fenced enclosure of unsightly yards will help to bring about the desired transformation. It is recognized that planting must be carried out with due regard for retaining a clear view of the right-of-way and for using varieties of trees and shrubs which will not require high maintenance costs. It is not proposed that all rights-of-way be landscaped, but rather that planting be concentrated where it will do the most to improve the appearance of the area. The railways presently maintain high standards of tidiness and cleanliness consistent with railway operations, but this should be accompanied by a positive policy of landscape treatment in selected areas. It is a well-known fact that a comparatively small expenditure in planting yields results whose value bears little relationship to the original cost.

Without benefit of screening, this railway track detracts from home surroundings.



Little beauty borders this important highway approach. Trees and shrubs planted on railway property would screen rows of freight cars.



Railway tracks which adjoin residential areas, highway entrances or important thoroughfares should be given first priority in an improvement program. While no specific locations are proposed here for improvement, it is contemplated that the Citizen Committee will continue to operate as a working committee to develop proposals for improvement on particular sites and to discuss implementation of such proposals with representatives of the railways.



## Design and Treatment of Commercial and Industrial Buildings and Sites

Commercial and industrial establishments need not sacrifice their essential functions of service and production in order to be attractive in appearance. Developments should be such as to fit in with neighboring uses. For instance, commercial establishments located in small commercial islands in residential areas should be set back from the property line in suitable relationship to adjacent residential buildings. Such a requirement appears in the proposed zoning by-law.

In larger commercial districts and in the Central Business District buildings can be grouped to advantage. The result of such integration is much more pleasing than rows of individual shops. Shops may be grouped around an open area in which children can play safely while their mothers shop. Such developments offer off-street parking space, easy access for pedestrians, safe and convenient shopping and opportunities for attractive landscaping. This type of development can be used in secondary commercial areas as well as in small neighborhood shopping centres. There has been a limited trend towards integration of store design in Greater Winnipeg recently. In planning new developments, it is recommended that careful consideration be given to use of proven techniques in commercial site development and to treatment of the properties so that they will in no way detract from the appearance of the area.

Except in the downtown area where development is most concentrated, office buildings and banks can often be developed with planting and open lawn to produce a more interesting and desirable appearance. Use of lawn, shrubs and flowers has produced excellent developments of this type at some branch banks. Since customers prefer to do their business in pleasant surroundings, it seems reasonable to suppose that a small investment in improved appearance through planting and proper maintenance will pay dividends in goodwill and patronage.



Built to the property line, this building is cold and bare — of interest only to those with money in the bank.



How much nicer to work and do business in surroundings like this — which also offer a pleasant aspect for the neighbors.



The possibility of flower box treatment on the front of buildings, particularly in the downtown area, is suggested for consideration. Such a technique would improve the appearance of otherwise drab building fronts by adding color and natural beauty. Much of the conflict in the appearance of various buildings even within a single block would be overcome. Such provision may be less expensive than new fronts for many of these buildings and they would, moreover, absorb a proportion of the summer heat particularly in buildings facing south. It is suggested that such a proposal could be brought about at less expense by a number of buildings agreeing to pay the cost of joint maintenance. While this technique has not been commonly used on groups of buildings, it has been used effectively on individual business buildings in many places on this continent and in Europe. A number of years ago, however, the City of Dresden was able to establish such a system on one particular street of otherwise ill-assorted and generally old, drab buildings with signal success, creating what amounted to a show place in that city.

Flowers add a touch of spring to this retail building.



Industrial structures are no longer considered inevitable eye-sores. As evidenced by certain local developments as well as by construction elsewhere, an industrial plant may be an asset in appearance if the building is of appropriate design and so located on the site as to permit suitable landscaping. Two industrial establishments in Greater Winnipeg which have set a fine example in improved design, although more planting might be used to advantage, are shown on the following page.



Typical of many old industrial buildings — no care for appearance and no yard.





Industrial plant of good appearance, improved by trees on the boulevards.



A good looking industrial building with well trimmed lawn. Might be improved by use of shrubs.

Industrial sites usually need such treatment as enclosures to screen necessary outdoor storage space, and trees, shrubs or lawn. Screening may be accomplished by use of well maintained fences or high hedges. Painting, planting and adequate maintenance of individual properties are some of the elements which in combination will result in a more livable urban area.



Factory with landscaping — according to the management nothing is more inspiring or cheaper to acquire and maintain than grass and trees.



It is recommended that industrial establishments take steps to eliminate smoke where their production methods produce this nuisance. By-law No. 4194 of the City of Winnipeg deems the emission of dense black or grey smoke a public nuisance, and requires that every building be provided with a chimney or such other apparatus as shall consume the smoke or prevent it from being carried to other premises to the inconvenience or injury of the citizens. Poor fuel and incomplete combustion of waste material have been partially responsible for smoke and fly ash nuisance in Greater Winnipeg. The by-law requirements have not been strictly enforced during the past few years, due in part to the shortage of good fuel, but action should now be taken to check up on industrial plants which are creating a smoke nuisance.

### **Design and Treatment of Highways, Thorofares and Residential Streets**

There are many possibilities for improved design, lawn development, and planting of trees and shrubs along highways, thorofares and residential streets, where they will not create hazards by interfering with a clear view of traffic. Highway and thorofare connections and turns require adequate curves, so they will be safe when driving at normal speeds. These curved connections between roadways may provide ideal, irregularly shaped spots for planting. The best highway treatment in this area is on McGillivray Boulevard south of Winnipeg in the Municipality of Fort Garry. The intersection of this highway with Pembina Highway could be landscaped to advantage.

In the development of thorofares, safety is again the prime consideration, but this does not outlaw beauty. Thorofares should be of sufficient width to allow a paved roadway plus a boulevard strip, a width of 100 feet for six-lane thorofares and 120 feet for eight-lane thorofares being recommended in the report on Major Thorofares. Initial development of the thorofare may provide two paved roadways, one on each side of a centre boulevard. Lawn and shrubs offer interesting vistas when planted on the centre strip.

Present thorofare development in Greater Winnipeg includes some boulevarded streets. Broadway, from Main Street to Osborne Street, has a centre boulevard strip on which street car tracks are laid. When street car service on Broadway is discontinued under the modernization plans of the Winnipeg Electric Company, shrubs could be added to this centre strip which is already treed. Other examples of routes with separated traffic lanes are Pembina Highway, St. Mary's Road and Henderson Highway, but these thorofares require considerable attention to take advantage of the space available for boulevard treatment.

Trees add to parklike appearance of city drives and can be used on traffic islands without blocking the view.



Planting of traffic separation islands can add much to the general appearance of thorofares and detract in no way from their usefulness. Improved traffic control furnished by such an island, and the enhanced appearance obtained by planting is illustrated above.



Residential streets, whose function it is to provide access to dwellings, offer good scope for boulevard planting to emphasize the quiet, residential atmosphere. Many varieties of trees can be used, as long as they are not mixed together on one street. Where boulevards are located on each side of the roadway, as is the general practice in Greater Winnipeg, it is recommended that the boulevard separate the roadway and sidewalk, to provide greater safety for children playing on the walks. Centre boulevards, such as are presently developed on Wellington Crescent, Burrows Avenue and Inkster Boulevard in Winnipeg, and on Overdale Street in St. James, improve the appearance of the street and can be used for flowering shrubs of various shapes and sizes as well as for trees and grass. A walkway on the centre boulevard offers an opportunity for a pleasant stroll.



An attractive centre boulevard with footpath under the trees.

Subdivisions designed according to modern planning techniques can be adequately served with only one sidewalk between the houses and roadway access on the other side. This would eliminate all traffic danger to pedestrians and to children playing on the walks, as well as offering opportunity for interesting landscaping. Planting could be concentrated in appropriate locations, such as the small areas of irregular shape created by the curved streets. Such a development, with small park areas, may be found in Greater Winnipeg in the new Wildwood Subdivision in the Municipality of Fort Garry. The subdivision plan for the Norwood Golf Course calls for similar treatment, but actual construction has not yet commenced.

Boulevards should be sufficiently wide to allow adequate space for proper growth of trees. More variety in the species used may also add interest to landscaping of boulevards in this area. Shrubs may be used to advantage where tree planting is not advisable due to limited space available or to the possibility of creating traffic hazards by interrupting the view. There are many attractively treed streets in Greater Winnipeg, such as Wellington Crescent and Wolseley Avenue in Winnipeg, Kingston Crescent in St. Vital, South Drive in Fort Garry, and Overdale Street in St. James, to mention only a few.



Shrubs as well as trees may be used to advantage on boulevards.



Boulevard planting can help to counteract the unfortunate and monotonous effect of dwellings built in an absolutely straight line, with no variation in the set-back of the building from the street, and little variation in construction details. The bareness and rigidity of such construction can be somewhat softened by the more varied lines of natural growth, although landscape treatment is certainly not a cure for routine and unimaginative construction practices.

Lack of variety in construction and no planting produce a barren street — hot in summer and cold in winter.



Boulevard planting improves appearance — will offer more shade as trees mature.



### **Treatment of Residential Properties**

Site planning of individual lots is important in using property to the best advantage. The location of a house on the lot should be determined in relation to the street and lot lines, while garage location should be decided in relation to the house entrance and access from the street or lane, so the driveway will not occupy too great a proportion of the lot area.

Landscaping of the site depends upon the layout of the home, if a pleasant view is to be obtained from large windows or from porches. Good distribution of shade trees, proper location of hedges, walks and drives, and tasteful use of flower beds will make an attractive and useful yard.

Freak treatment, such as use of auto tires for borders and water tanks for window boxes detracts from the general appearance and should therefore be avoided.

Good landscaping of individual properties will improve the appearance of the street, since it helps to create the illusion of greater variety where building lines are uniform and

buildings are similar. Well cared for residential properties together with boulevard planting combine to produce attractive home surroundings, as shown below.



Trees and shrubs on private properties, plus boulevard trees, create a pleasant city street.

Maintenance of homes and care of yards is essential to an attractive neighborhood. The annual 'Clean Up Paint Up' campaign of the Board of Trade has done much to encourage public interest in the appearance of the city and to get home owners to work early in the spring improving their properties.



# POLES, WIRES, SIGNS

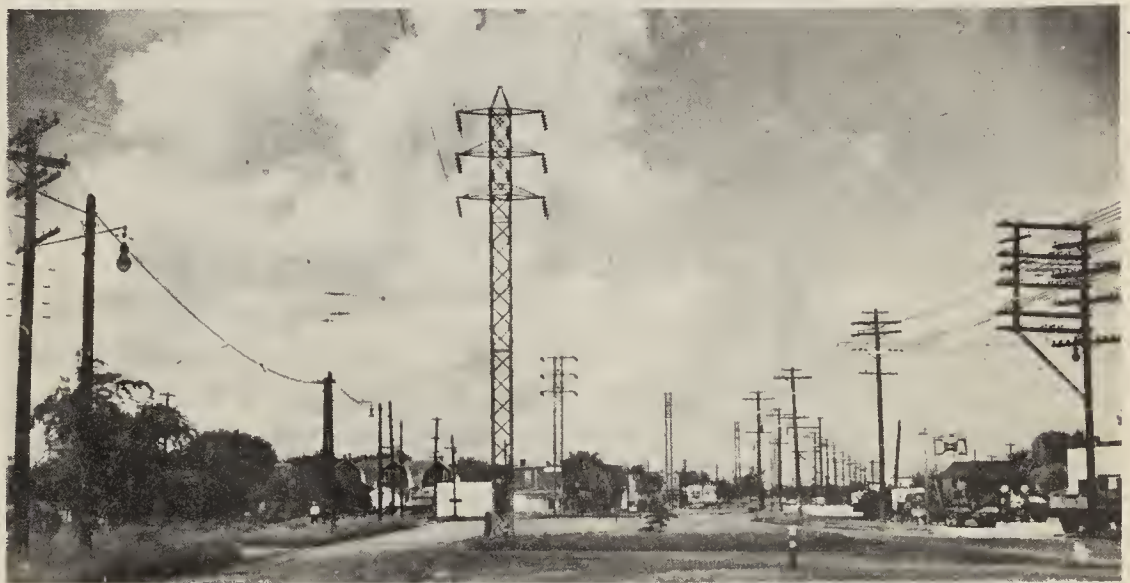
## Poles and Wires

Wires are necessary for provision of such services as telephone, light, power and transit. Erection of poles by each utility to serve its own purposes often results, however, in a mass of poles and wires, unsightly in appearance. It would be desirable from the viewpoint of appearance to have all such wires located underground, but due to the expense involved it is acknowledged that such a program of underground installations could not be undertaken all at once. It is suggested, however, that an improvement program spread over a period of years might be feasible and would certainly be highly desirable. Where new installations are being made, it is recommended that wires be placed underground wherever possible.

When located above ground, poles for wires should be placed along rear lot lines, in the lanes, or along an easement which should be required for such services in subdivisions without lanes. City of Winnipeg By-law No. 7406 provides for joint use of poles in specified areas by the City of Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Electric Company, for electric light, heat and power, and where it will offer no interference with operation, by the street railway. It is recommended that such practices be extended to cover larger areas and more facilities. Use of one pole, wherever possible, for wires providing various services, will help to minimize the number of poles required, and thereby improve the appearance.

It is suggested that consideration be given to the practice of painting poles to lengthen their life and to blend them with their surroundings.

Highway adorned with big power lines, tiny shrubs.



Myriad wires and muddy boulevards — no ideal tourist entrance.







Ornamental lighting related to  
tree growth.

Trees planted 1927



1936



1943



## Street Lighting

Well lighted streets are desirable in an urban area for safe and easy movement of traffic and pedestrians. Effective lighting requires not only equipment of good design, with standards properly located, but also coordination with street tree planting. Poorly designed lighting standards may fail to provide adequate, well-diffused light, or may waste illumination by failing to direct it towards the street. Unless lighting is related to planting and allowance is made for future growth, difficulty is likely to develop from foliage absorbing the light and blocking it from the roadway and sidewalk. In a recent report of the City Hydro, it was suggested that a routine be instituted whereby the Street Lighting Division would forward recommendations to the Public Parks Board regarding trimming of trees. This seems to be a practical suggestion, which would provide continuous coordination and better service.

It is understood that the Parks Board has given some study to the problem created by boulevard planting and plans to space trees sixty feet apart in future, instead of the present thirty feet, on boulevards. This will permit trees to grow properly, as well as reduce interference with street lighting.

Straight poles have been used until recently to light the streets of Greater Winnipeg. These are of various types, including ornamental standards in some residential sections. New lighting standards which are now being installed in the City of Winnipeg have a bracket arm, from which the luminaires are suspended. These provide better illumination and are less susceptible to interference from foliage. An illustration appears above.

Some indication of public consciousness of street lighting standards was given recently in St. James, where residents of a new residential subdivision requested permission to install ornamental lighting standards at their own expense.

## Traffic Signals and Signs

If traffic regulations are to be obeyed, it is essential that street signals, stop signs, parking restriction signs and turning regulations signs be legible and easily seen. Signals should be located uniformly at each intersection, so they can be found readily by both citizens and tourists. The present practice of erecting traffic signs on existing posts wherever possible, to eliminate unnecessary sidewalk obstructions, is desirable and should be continued.

In Greater Winnipeg, traffic signals are located on the right hand corner at most intersections. Turning regulation signs are usually posted just below the traffic light. A few lighted turning signals have been installed recently in the business district, one in the form of a low post at the centre of the intersection and the others in a box below the traffic light.

The unusual width of some of the main thoroughfares in Greater Winnipeg, such as Portage Avenue and Main Street, adds to the distance at which signs must be read and in some cases where there is printing to be read makes it necessary to use larger signs than would ordinarily be required.



## Street Names and Name Signs

In Greater Winnipeg, as in most cities, many street names are repeated in the metropolitan area, thereby creating confusion. Recently a committee was set up for the Greater Winnipeg area to review the extent of such repetition and to recommend a procedure for eliminating it.

Street name signs should be clearly lettered, and located where they may be seen easily by motorists and pedestrians. Location should be uniform, preferably on posts erected near the roadway, rather than on buildings or sidewalks. Consideration should also be given to their visibility at night from the light of the street lamp.

Street name signs in Greater Winnipeg are in general uniformly located. There are some exceptions, where there are special gates, large concrete or brick posts, or hanging metal signs, on which the names appear. Special treatment in new residential subdivisions is a practice which may result in undue variation throughout the area, if not carefully handled.

The design of street name signs in the City of Winnipeg has been changed recently and the new signs are now being erected. In addition to showing the street name, there is a place for the street numbers in the block, a very useful indication.

## House Numbering and Numbers

The system of house numbering and the actual numbers used should be such that the desired house can be quickly located. The present system in the City of Winnipeg uses the rivers as a base, numbering away from the river. Since the rivers follow a winding course, numbers at a main thoroughfare often differ greatly, even on adjacent streets.

In some cities, houses are numbered so that each city block begins at the next hundred. The length of many of the city blocks in Winnipeg makes this impossible, however, since there are more than fifty lots on each side of the street in one block. Consideration has been given to a review of the present system, with the aim of devising some means of improvement. It is a large undertaking, however, which may well be postponed while more urgent matters receive attention.

Actual house numbers should be legible and easily read. It is the responsibility of the individual to provide a number which can be seen from the street, and is not covered with paint or vine. A new city by-law stipulates that the numbers be at least three inches high, of a color contrasting with the house, and in such a position that they may be easily seen from the street. While it is desirable that the numbers be legible, they should be suited to the appearance of the house. In general, too large or elaborate numbers form the focus of attention, instead of discreetly offering necessary information. New types of house numbers are on the market which have the advantage of better visibility at night.



## Sidewalk Obstructions

Poles, hydrants, fire alarm boxes, police call boxes, letter and parcel boxes, traffic signs, and bus and car stop signs, are necessary to urban living, but form sidewalk obstructions which should be kept as close to the curb as possible. In locating poles and signs at intersections, more care could be taken that they do not obstruct the view of the street for either pedestrians or motorists. On many streets, the poles take a great deal



of room, as on Graham Avenue, for instance, where there are hydro poles, telephone poles, and poles for trolley coach overhead lines. On some residential streets where roadway pavements have been widened at the expense of adequate sidewalk width, poles are placed in the sidewalk, leaving barely enough space for two people to pass.

There are no street obstructions in Winnipeg in the form of rubbish containers, or newspaper stands. Street clocks on Portage Avenue offer little interference, as they are erected at the curb. Some obstruction to pedestrian movement is created by street photographers, flower stands and street vendors, which have appeared in increasing numbers in recent months.

### Overhanging Signs

In commercial areas, each establishment wishes to display its name and business, and there has been a tendency for each to try to exceed its neighbor in the size of its sign. This not only adds to the conglomerate appearance of the street, but if signs overhanging the sidewalk are close together, each blocks the view of that next to it. It is therefore desirable that some control of overhanging signs be exercised. Such control is provided at present under By-law No. 13981 of the City of Winnipeg, which requires that a permit be obtained to erect a projecting sign, a license be purchased annually, electric signs be inspected and maintained in good working order, signs be supported only from a permanent building, clearance be provided from poles and wires, and area regulations be met. There are, however, no areas where projecting signs are prohibited by by-law. Some realtors have made a practice of forbidding projecting signs on commercial buildings over which they have control.

Projecting signs, poles, wires, street lights and parking signs all add to this picture of confusion.



Facial signs offer no conflict, are easily seen and produce a more orderly appearance.





Some coordination of signs on store fronts is desirable from the standpoint of appearance and indirectly from the standpoint of merchandising, as improved appearance of the street as a whole should attract more shoppers. The illustration on the previous page shows poor appearance on a main street created by many signs. In contrast, the improvement which can be achieved through good treatment of store fronts and elimination of overhanging signs, is illustrated in the lower photograph.

It is suggested that an appropriate function of a Downtown Business Association, establishment of which was recommended in the Central Business District report, would be to study the use of signs with a view to developing a type of sign which would be more effective, efficient and at the same time more pleasing in appearance, than presently used conflicting, overhanging signs. Such an organization might initiate action in areas most in need of improvement. An example of such an area is the commercial section on Main Street south of the C.P.R. Station, in which much improvement could be made both to the buildings and to the signs. This area is of importance to the community because it is the first view of Greater Winnipeg for many visitors and business people coming from C.P.R. trains. The whole community would be served by action which assisted in eliminating blight in commercial areas, just as it is in residential districts.

## Billboards

Billboards are a widely used advertising medium, but there is apparently some public concern over their location. They should not be erected in residential areas where they may block the light from homes and spoil the general appearance of the neighborhood. Under the present zoning by-law of the City of Winnipeg billboards are excluded from areas zoned as residential. The proposed zoning by-law would also prohibit their erection in residential areas, and would require that existing billboards in residential districts be removed within five years after passage of the by-law. In the Municipality of St. James billboards are not permitted in any portion of the area.

Reputable sign companies provide a service through the medium of billboard advertising, and as a matter of policy are interested in good maintenance of structures and property. It is, moreover, recognized that there are instances where signs have improved and brightened poorly kept properties rather than deteriorated them, or have helped to screen unsightly conditions. In general, however, care should be maintained to avoid unsuitable locations, to preserve natural beauty, to see that no accident hazard is created, and to prevent excessive numbers in any one area.



Residential areas are not an appropriate place for billboards.



An important major thoroughfare lined with advertising — beautified or blemished?



Billboard border for landscaped grounds.



Good appearance of grass slopes marred by billboards on adjoining property.



# P H O T O G R A P H Y

Photographs by Frank J. Kucera, with the exception of the following.

Page 19, top, from Architectural Record,  
April 1948

Page 20, bottom, from Architectural Record,  
August 1948

Page 26, from City of Winnipeg Street Lighting  
Report and recommendations, 1947





